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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 07 BRIDGETOWN 000109

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, PRM, AND WHA/CAR STATE PASS  
TO USAID/LAC/CAR-BOUNCY

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TAGS: KTIP XL PHUM KWMN ELAB SMIG ASEC KFRD PREF VC  
SUBJECT: TIP SUBMISSION - ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

REF: STATE 132759

¶1. (U) As requested reftel, below are Post's responses to questions regarding St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.

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PARA 23 - THE COUNTRY'S TIP SITUATION  
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¶2. (SBU)

-- A. What is (are) the source(s) of available information on trafficking in persons? What plans are in place (if any) to undertake further documentation of human trafficking? How reliable are these sources?

There are three primary sources for TIP information: the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (GOSVG), which includes the police and the Ministry of Gender Affairs; the press; and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Human Rights Association (SVGHRA). The SVGHRA and the press are reliable, however the GOSVG can be selective in the information it releases and is less timely and reliable. Both the government and civil society are sensitive to TIP issues, but neither consider TIP to be a critical problem in the country.

Both entities are understaffed to take vigorous additional steps to increase TIP documentation.

-- B. Is the country a country of origin, transit, and/or destination for internationally trafficked men, women, or children? Does trafficking occur within the country's borders? If so, does internal trafficking occur in territory outside of the government's control (e.g. in a civil war situation)? To where are people trafficked? For what purposes are they trafficked? Provide, where possible, numbers or estimates for each group of trafficking victims. Have there been any changes in the TIP situation since the last TIP Report (e.g. changes in destinations)?

St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) is a small multi-island nation with a population of 110,000. There have been no reports of TIP from the government or the press during the reporting period. In conversations with TIP contacts, the only TIP issue is the possible trafficking of young women for prostitution, although there have been no confirmed reports of any women being trafficking victims. SVG has the potential to be a country of transit and destination for persons, primarily young women, from the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Venezuela or other countries in the region. There are no reports of trafficking victims within the country's borders. There are no sources of TIP statistics and estimates point to a minimal problem if any. There have been

no changes in the TIP situation since the last TIP report.

-- C. What kind of conditions are the victims trafficked into?

There have been reports of women traveling to SVG to engage in prostitution, but no reports that these women are victims of TIP. There have been no reports of sexual slavery or trafficking of children for prostitution.

-- D. Vulnerability to TIP: Are certain groups of persons more at risk of being trafficked (e.g. women and children, boys versus girls, certain ethnic groups, refugees, IDPs, etc.)?

Young women are the most vulnerable group in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but there is currently no evidence that they are being trafficked.

-- E. Traffickers and Their Methods: Who are the traffickers/exploiters? Are they independent business people? Small or family-based crime groups? Large international organized crime syndicates? What methods are used to approach victims? For example, are they offered lucrative jobs, sold by their families, or approached by friends of friends? What methods are used to move the victims (e.g., are false documents being used?). Are employment, travel, and tourism agencies or marriage brokers involved with or fronting for traffickers or crime groups to traffic individuals?

There have been no reports of TIP by the press or the government. Small business owners of establishments such as

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bars and/or brothels may offer women employment as prostitutes, however there is no evidence any women have been trafficked against their will. There is no indication that employment, travel, tourism agencies, or marriage brokers are involved in TIP.

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PARA 24 - SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE  
GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TIP EFFORTS  
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¶3. (SBU)

-- A. Does the government acknowledge that trafficking is a problem in the country? If not, why not?

The government does not deny that TIP may occur in isolated incidents, but does not acknowledge TIP is a serious problem, and there have been no reports of TIP.

-- B. Which government agencies are involved in anti-trafficking efforts and which agency, if any, has the lead?

The police force and the Ministry of Gender Affairs are the two primary government agencies dealing with any TIP issues. The police have the lead in combating TIP as a law enforcement matter, typically as part of routine enforcement measures against prostitution. The Ministry of Gender Affairs is able to support TIP victims with assistance, but did not report any victims of TIP.

-- C. What are the limitations on the government's ability to address this problem in practice? For example, is funding for police or other institutions inadequate? Is overall corruption a problem? Does the government lack the resources to aid victims?

Almost every government agency in SVG lacks sufficient resources, including both funding and staffing. The government's primary deficiency in addressing any TIP problem

is an inability to patrol their borders. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a multi-island nation with an extensive coastline. The coast guard is undermanned, underequipped, operates only one vessel and is unable to remain at sea overnight. It would be possible for a TIP victim to enter and leave SVG without the government knowing.

-- D. To what extent does the government systematically monitor its anti-trafficking efforts (on all fronts -- prosecution, victim protection, and prevention) and periodically make available, publicly or privately and directly or through regional/international organizations, its assessments of these anti-trafficking efforts?

The government does not take specific measures to monitor potential trafficking and has no official reports or statistics.

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PARA 25 - INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION  
OF TRAFFICKERS  
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¶4. (SBU)

-- A. Existing Laws against TIP: Does the country have a law or laws specifically prohibiting trafficking in persons -- both for sexual exploitation and labor? If so, please specifically cite the name of the law(s) and its date of enactment and provide the exact language (actual copies preferable) of the TIP provisions. Please provide a full inventory of trafficking laws, including non-criminal statutes that allow for civil penalties against alleged trafficking crimes (e.g., civil forfeiture laws and laws against illegal debt). Does the law(s) cover both internal and transnational forms of trafficking? If not, under what other laws can traffickers be prosecuted? For example, are there laws against slavery or the exploitation of prostitution by means of force, fraud, or coercion? Are these other laws being used in trafficking cases?

There are no existing laws prohibiting TIP. There are laws

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prohibiting slavery, prostitution, child labor and kidnapping. There are no accounts of these laws being used to prosecute TIP cases.

-- B. Punishment of Sex Trafficking Offenses: What are the prescribed and imposed penalties for trafficking people for sexual exploitation?

There are no laws prohibiting TIP, so there are no specific penalties for trafficking people for sexual exploitation.

-- C. Punishment of Labor Trafficking Offenses: What are the prescribed and imposed penalties for trafficking for labor exploitation, such as forced or bonded labor? If your country is a source country for labor migrants, do the government's laws provide for criminal punishment -- i.e. jail time -- for labor recruiters who engage in recruitment of workers using knowingly fraudulent or deceptive offers with the purpose of subjecting workers to trafficking in the destination country? If your country is a destination for labor migrants, are there laws punishing employers or labor agents who confiscate workers' passports or travel documents for the purpose of trafficking, switch contracts without the worker's consent as a means to keep the worker in a state of service, or withhold payment of salaries as means of keeping the worker in a state of service?

There are no laws prohibiting TIP, so there are no specific penalties for trafficking people for labor exploitation. There were no reports of TIP for labor exploitation.

-- D. What are the prescribed penalties for rape or forcible sexual assault? (NOTE: This is necessary to evaluate a foreign government's compliance with TVPA Minimum Standard 2, which reads: "For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking . . . the government of the country should prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault (rape)." END NOTE)

The penalty for rape or forcible sexual assault is 10 years to life in prison.

-- E. Law Enforcement Statistics: Did the government prosecute any cases against human trafficking offenders during the reporting period? If so, provide numbers of investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences imposed, including details on plea bargains and fines, if relevant and available. Please note the number of convicted traffickers who received suspended sentences and the number who received only a fine as punishment. Please indicate which laws were used to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence traffickers. Also, if possible, please desegregate numbers of cases by type of TIP (labor vs. commercial sexual exploitation) and victims (children under 18 years of age vs. adults). If in a labor source country, did the government criminally prosecute labor recruiters who recruit workers using knowingly fraudulent or deceptive offers or by imposing fees or commissions for the purpose of subjecting the worker to debt bondage? Did the government in a labor destination country criminally prosecute employers or labor agents who confiscate workers' passports/travel documents for the purpose of trafficking, switch contracts or terms of employment without the worker's consent to keep workers in a state of service, use physical or sexual abuse or the threat of such abuse to keep workers in a state of service, or withhold payment of salaries as a means to keep workers in a state of service? What were the actual punishments imposed on persons convicted of these offenses? Are the traffickers serving the time sentenced? If not, why not?

The government did not prosecute any cases against human trafficking offenders. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is not currently a labor destination country, and there were no cases of labor agents confiscating workers' travel documents.

-- F. Does the government provide any specialized training for government officials in how to recognize, investigate, and prosecute instances of trafficking? Specify whether NGOs, international organizations, and/or the USG provide specialized training for host government officials.

The government does not provide specialized training for government officials in how to recognize, investigate, and

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prosecute instances of trafficking. SVGHRA is the only NGO active in the TIP arena, and their activity is minimal. They do not provide any specialized TIP training to the government. Both groups, though, would be amenable to TIP training sponsored by outside agencies.

--G. Does the government cooperate with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases? If possible, provide the number of cooperative international investigations on trafficking during the reporting period.

There are no such cases on record.

-- H. Does the government extradite persons who are charged with trafficking in other countries? If so, please provide the number of traffickers extradited during the reporting period, and the number of trafficking extraditions pending. In particular, please report on any pending or concluded extraditions of trafficking offenders to the United States.

The government has never extradited or charged anyone with TIP related crimes.

-- I. Is there evidence of government involvement in or tolerance of trafficking, on a local or institutional level? If so, please explain in detail.

The only reports of the government's potential involvement in the tolerance of TIP are local police officers tolerating prostitution by women from countries other than SVG. Usually police will shut down prostitution when citizens report it.

-- J. If government officials are involved in trafficking, what steps has the government taken to end such participation? Please indicate the number of government officials investigated and prosecuted for involvement in trafficking or trafficking-related corruption during the reporting period. Have any been convicted? What sentence(s) was imposed? Please specify if officials received suspended sentences, or were given a fine, fired, or reassigned to another position within the government as punishment. Please indicate the number of convicted officials that received suspended sentences or received only a fine as punishment.

There is no evidence suggesting government officials are involved in TIP, and no government officials have been charged or prosecuted for TIP offenses.

-- K. Is prostitution legalized or decriminalized? Specifically, are the activities of the prostitute criminalized? Are the activities of the brothel owner/operator, clients, pimps, and enforcers criminalized? Are these laws enforced? If prostitution is legal and regulated, what is the legal minimum age for this activity? Note that in countries with federalist systems, prostitution laws may be under state or local jurisdiction and may differ among jurisdictions.

Prostitution is illegal, as is the facilitation of prostitution, such as pimping or running a brothel. Government efforts to enforce these laws are weak.

-- L. For countries that contribute troops to international peacekeeping efforts, please indicate whether the government vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted and sentenced nationals of the country deployed abroad as part of a peacekeeping or other similar mission who engaged in or facilitated severe forms of trafficking or who exploited victims of such trafficking.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines does not generally contribute troops to international peacekeeping efforts.

-- M. If the country has an identified problem of child sex tourists coming to the country, what are the countries of origin for sex tourists? How many foreign pedophiles did the government prosecute or deport/extradite to their country of origin? If your host country's nationals are perpetrators of child sex tourism, do the country's child sexual abuse laws have extraterritorial coverage (similar to the U.S. PROTECT Act) to allow the prosecution of suspected sex tourists for crimes committed abroad? If so, how many of the country's nationals were prosecuted and/or convicted during the reporting period under the extraterritorial provision(s) for traveling to other countries to engage in child sex tourism?

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St. Vincent does not have an identified problem of child sex tourists coming to the country.

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PARA 26 - PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS  
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¶5. (SBU)

-- A. What kind of protection is the government able under existing law to provide for victims and witnesses? Does it provide these protections in practice?

The Ministry of Gender Affairs is able to provide some assistance to trafficking victims if necessary, however this assistance is limited to counseling and shelter in a battered women's shelter. This assistance does not include financial support. No TIP victims requested such assistance during the reporting period.

-- B. Does the country have victim care facilities (shelters or drop-in centers) which are accessible to trafficking victims? Do foreign victims have the same access to care as domestic trafficking victims? Where are child victims placed (e.g., in shelters, foster care, or juvenile justice detention centers)? Does the country have specialized care for adults in addition to children? Does the country have specialized care for male victims as well as female? Does the country have specialized facilities dedicated to helping victims of trafficking? Are these facilities operated by the government or by NGOs? What is the funding source of these facilities? Please estimate the amount the government spent (in U.S. dollar equivalent) on these specialized facilities dedicated to helping trafficking victims during the reporting period.

SVG operates a battered women's shelter. The government has indicated women who are victims of trafficking are welcome, however there have been no reports of TIP victims using this shelter. A local NGO, Marion House, provides victim care services that could be accessed by trafficking victims. Foreign and domestic victims of trafficking have the same access to these services. Children of women housed in the shelter would be housed with their mothers. Children without parents would usually be placed with relatives, and there is one facility for teenage boys. There is no specialized care for males and females. There are no facilities dedicated specifically to trafficking victims.

-- C. Does the government provide trafficking victims with access to legal, medical and psychological services? If so, please specify the kind of assistance provided. Does the government provide funding or other forms of support to foreign or domestic NGOs and/or international organizations for providing these services to trafficking victims? Please explain and provide any funding amounts in U.S. dollar equivalent. If assistance provided was in-kind, please specify exact assistance. Please specify if funding for assistance comes from a federal budget or from regional or local governments.

The government does not provide access to legal and psychological services, but would provide medical services to victims of TIP through the state run hospital. The government does provide some funding for Marion House.

-- D. Does the government assist foreign trafficking victims, for example, by providing temporary to permanent residency status, or other relief from deportation? If so, please explain.

The only assistance available to TIP victims is temporary shelter in the battered women's shelter and limited medical care. These services are available to all victims of crime and are not specific to TIP victims.

-- E. Does the government provide longer-term shelter or housing benefits to victims or other resources to aid the victims in rebuilding their lives?

No.

-- F. Does the government have a referral process to transfer victims detained, arrested or placed in protective custody by

law enforcement authorities to institutions that provide short- or long-term care (either government or NGO-run)?

No.

-- G. What is the total number of trafficking victims identified during the reporting period? Of these, how many victims were referred to care facilities for assistance by law enforcement authorities during the reporting period? By social services officials? What is the number of victims assisted by government-funded assistance programs and those not funded by the government during the reporting period?

There were no reports of TIP victims during the reporting period.

-- H. Do the government's law enforcement, immigration, and social services personnel have a formal system of proactively identifying victims of trafficking among high-risk persons with whom they come in contact (e.g., foreign persons arrested for prostitution or immigration violations)? For countries with legalized prostitution, does the government have a mechanism for screening for trafficking victims among persons involved in the legal/regulated commercial sex trade?

There is no system in place to proactively identify TIP victims.

-- I. Are the rights of victims respected? Are trafficking victims detained or jailed? If so, for how long? Are victims fined? Are victims prosecuted for violations of other laws, such as those governing immigration or prostitution?

Since there were no reports of TIP victims, this information is unavailable.

-- J. Does the government encourage victims to assist in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking? How many victims assisted in the investigation and prosecution of traffickers during the reporting period? May victims file civil suits or seek legal action against traffickers? Does anyone impede victim access to such legal redress? If a victim is a material witness in a court case against a former employer, is the victim permitted to obtain other employment or to leave the country pending trial proceedings? Are there means by which a victim may obtain restitution?

Since there were no reports of TIP victims, this information is unavailable.

-- K. Does the government provide any specialized training for government officials in identifying trafficking victims and in the provision of assistance to trafficked victims, including the special needs of trafficked children? Does the government provide training on protections and assistance to its embassies and consulates in foreign countries that are destination or transit countries? What is the number of trafficking victims assisted by the host country's embassies or consulates abroad during the reporting period? Please explain the type of assistance provided (travel documents, referrals to assistance, payment for transportation home).

The government does not provide any specialized TIP training for any of its officials or embassies, but would be amenable to training offered by outside sources. There were no reports of TIP victims.

- L. Does the government provide assistance, such as medical aid, shelter, or financial help, to its nationals who are repatriated as victims of trafficking?

The government does not provide any special services specific to TIP victims. If nationals of SVG that are victims of TIP are repatriated, only the normal social services are available.

-- M. Which international organizations or NGOs, if any, work with trafficking victims? What type of services do they provide? What sort of cooperation do they receive from local authorities?

SVGHRA is able to provide legal services and limited aid.

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PARA 27 - PREVENTION  
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16. (SBU)

-- A. Did the government conduct anti-trafficking information or education campaigns during the reporting period? If so, briefly describe the campaign(s), including their objectives and effectiveness. Please provide the number of people reached by such awareness efforts, if available. Do these campaigns target potential trafficking victims and/or the demand for trafficking (e.g. "clients" of prostitutes or beneficiaries of forced labor)? (Note: This can be an especially noteworthy effort where prostitution is legal. End Note.)

The government did not conduct anti-trafficking for education campaigns.

-- B. Does the government monitor immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of trafficking?

The government does not monitor immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of trafficking

-- C. Is there a mechanism for coordination and communication between various agencies, internal, international, and multilateral on trafficking-related matters, such as a multi-agency working group or a task force?

There are no specific mechanisms for coordination and communication between various agencies on trafficking related matters aside from normal communication on criminal activity among government agencies. Nothing specific to TIP.

-- D. Does the government have a national plan of action to address trafficking in persons? If the plan was developed during the reporting period, which agencies were involved in developing it? Were NGOs consulted in the process? What steps has the government taken to implement the action plan?

There is no government plan of action to address TIP.

-- E: What measures has the government taken during the reporting period to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts? (see ref B, para. 9(3) for examples)

The government undertakes routine action to stop prostitution as part of its regular law enforcement responsibilities.

-- F. Required of all Posts: What measures has the government taken during the reporting period to reduce the participation in international child sex tourism by nationals of the country?

There is no evidence of participation in international child sex tourism by nationals of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.  
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